

and the cover, they allowed the box to pass into the city, and tried, by avoiding to speak of the affair among themselves, to forget what donkeys they had been.

The Grindwell government has many such alarms, and never appears entirely at its ease. It is fully aware of the combustible nature of the component parts of the Governing Machine. There is consequently great outlay of means to insure its safety. An immense number of public spies and functionaries are constantly employed in looking after the fires and lights about the city. Heavy restrictions are laid on all substances containing electricity, and great care is taken lest this subtle fluid should condense in spots and take the form of lightning. Fortunately, the unclouded sunshine seldom comes into Grindwell, else there would be the same fears with regard to light.

So long as this perpetual surveillance is kept up, the machine seems to work on well enough in the main; but the moment there is any remissness on the part of the police,—bang! goes a small explosion somewhere,—or, crack! a bit of the machinery,—and out rush the engineers with their bags of cotton-wool or tow to stop up the chinks, or their bundles of paper money to keep up the steam, or their buckets of oil and *soft soap* to pour upon the wheels.

One eccentric gentleman of my acquaintance persists in predicting that any day there may be a general blow-up, and the whole concern, engineers, financiers, priests, soldiers, and flunkies, all go to smash. He evidently wishes to see it; though, as far as personal comfort goes, one would rather be out of the way at such a time.

Most people seem to think, that, considering all things, the present head engineer is about the best man that could be found for the post he occupies. There are, however, a number of the Grindwell people—I can't say how many, for they are afraid to speak—who feel more and more that they are living in a stifled and altogether abnormal condition, and wish for an indefinite supply of the light, heat, air, and electricity which they see some of the neighboring cities enjoying.

What the result is to be no one can yet tell. We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with—a *crust*; some say, a very thin crust, such as might be got up by a skilful *patissier*, and over which gilded court-flies, and even *scarabæi*, may crawl with safety, but which must inevitably cave in beneath the boot-heels of a real, true, thinking man. We cannot forget that there are measureless catacombs and caverns yawning beneath the streets and houses of modern Grindwell.

SAINTS, AND THEIR BODIES.

EVER since the time of that dyspeptic heathen, Plotinus, the saints have been "ashamed of their bodies." What is worse, they have usually had reason for the shame. Of the four famous Latin fathers, Jerome describes his own limbs as misshapen, his skin as squalid, his bones as scarcely holding together; while Gregory the Great speaks in his Epistles of his own large size, as contrasted with his weakness and infirmities. Three of

the four Greek fathers—Chrysostom, Basil, and Gregory of Nazianzen—ruined their health early, and were wretched invalids for the remainder of their days. Three only of the whole eight were able-bodied men,—Ambrose, Augustine, and Athanasius; and the permanent influence of these three has been far greater, for good or for evil, than that of all the others put together.

Robust military saints there have

doubtless been, in the Roman Catholic Church: George, Michael, Sebastian, Eustace, Martin,—not to mention Hubert the Hunter, and Christopher the Christian Hercules. But these have always held a very secondary place in canonization. If we mistake not, Maurice and his whole Theban legion were sainted together, to the number of six thousand six hundred and sixty-six; doubtless they were stalwart men, but there never yet has been a chapel erected to one of them. The mediæval type of sanctity was a strong soul in a weak body; and it could be intensified either by strengthening the one or by further debilitating the other. The glory lay in contrast, not in combination. Yet, to do them justice, they conceded a strong and stately beauty to their female saints,—Catherine, Agnes, Agatha, Barbara, Cecilia, and the rest. It was reserved for the modern Pre-Raphaelites to attempt the combination of a maximum of saintliness with a minimum of pulmonary and digestive capacity.

But, indeed, from that day to this, the saints by spiritual laws have usually been sinners against physical laws, and the artists have merely followed the examples they found. Vasari records, that Carotto's masterpiece of painting, "The Three Archangels," at Verona, was criticized because the limbs of the angels were too slender, and Carotto, true to his conventional standard, replied, "Then they will fly the better." Saints have been flying to heaven for the same reason ever since,—and have commonly flown very early.

Indeed, the earlier some such saints cast off their bodies the better, they make so little use of them. Chittagutta, the Buddhist saint, dwelt in a cave in Ceylon. His devout visitors one day remarked on the miraculous beauty of the legendary paintings, representing scenes from the life of Buddha, which adorned the walls. The holy man informed them, that, during his sixty years' residence in the cave, he had been too much absorbed in meditation to notice

the existence of the paintings, but he would take their word for it. And in this non-intercourse with the visible world there has been an apostolical succession, from Chittagutta, down to the Andover divinity-student who refused to join his companions in their admiring gaze on that wonderful autumnal landscape which spreads itself before the Seminary Hill in October, but marched back into the Library, ejaculating, "Lord, turn thou mine eyes from beholding vanity!"

It is to be reluctantly recorded, in fact, that the Protestant saints have not ordinarily had much to boast of, in physical stamina, as compared with the Roman Catholic. They have not got far beyond Plotinus. We do not think it worth while to quote Calvin on this point, for he, as everybody knows, was an invalid for his whole lifetime. But we do take it hard, that the jovial Luther, in the midst of his ale and skittles, should have deliberately censured Juvenal's *mens sana in corpore sano*, as a pagan maxim!

If Saint Luther fails us, where are the advocates of the body to look for comfort? Nothing this side of ancient Greece, we fear, will afford adequate examples of the union of saintly souls and strong bodies. Pythagoras the sage we doubt not to have been identical with Pythagoras the inventor of pugilism, and he was, at any rate, (in the loving words of Bentley,) "a lusty proper man, and built as it were to make a good boxer." Cleanthes, whose sublime "Prayer" is, to our thinking, the highest strain left of early piety, was a boxer likewise. Plato was a famous wrestler, and Socrates was unequalled for his military endurance. Nor was one of these, like their puny follower Plotinus, too weak-sighted to revise his own manuscripts.

It would be tedious to analyze the causes of this modern deterioration of the saints. The fact is clear. There is in the community an impression that physical vigor and spiritual sanctity are incompatible. We knew a young Orthodox divine who lost his parish by swim-

ming the Merrimac River, and another who was compelled to ask a dismissal in consequence of vanquishing his most influential parishioner in a game of tennis; it seemed to the beaten party very unclerical. We further remember a match, in a certain sea-side bowling-alley, in which two brothers, young divines, took part. The sides being made up, with the exception of these two players, it was necessary to find places for them also. The head of one side accordingly picked his man, on the presumption (as he afterwards confessed) that the best preacher would naturally be the worst bowler. The athletic capacity, he thought, would be in inverse ratio to the sanctity. We are happy to add, that in this case his hopes were signally disappointed. But it shows which way the popular impression lies.

The poets have probably assisted in maintaining the delusion. How many cases of consumption Wordsworth must have accelerated by his assertion, that "the good die first"! Happily, he lived to disprove his own maxim. We, too, repudiate it utterly. Professor Peirce has proved by statistics that the best scholars in our colleges survive the rest; and we hold that virtue, like intellect, tends to longevity. The experience of the literary class shows that all excess is destructive, and that we need the harmonious action of all the faculties. Of the brilliant roll of the "young men of 1830," in Paris,—Balzac, Soulié, De Musset, De Bernard, Sue, and their comrades,—it is said that nearly every one has already perished, in the prime of life. What is the explanation? A stern one: opium, tobacco, wine, and licentiousness. "All died of softening of the brain or spinal marrow, or swelling of the heart." No doubt, many of the noble and the pure were dying prematurely at the same time; but it proceeded from the same essential cause: physical laws disobeyed and bodies exhausted. The evil is, that what in the debauchee is condemned, as suicide, is lauded in the devotee, as saintship. The *delirium tre-*

mens of the drunkard conveys scarcely a sterner moral lesson than the second childishness of the pure and abstemious Southey.

But, happily, times change, and saints with them. Our moral conceptions are expanding to take in that "athletic virtue" of the Greeks, ἀρετὴ γυμναστική, which Dr. Arnold, by precept and practice, defended. The modern English "Broad Church" aims at breadth of shoulders, as well as of doctrines. Kingsley paints his stalwart Philammons and Amyas Leighs, and his critics charge him with laying down a new definition of the saint, as a man who fears God and can walk a thousand miles in a thousand hours. Our American saintship, also, is beginning to have a body to it, a "Body of Divinity," indeed. Look at our three great popular preachers. The vigor of the paternal blacksmith still swings the sinewy arm of Beecher;—Parker performed the labors, mental and physical, of four able-bodied men, until even his great strength temporarily yielded;—and if ever dyspepsia attack the burly frame of Chapin, we fancy that dyspepsia will get the worst of it.

This is as it should be. One of the most potent causes of the ill-concealed alienation between the clergy and the people, in our community, is the supposed deficiency, on the part of the former, of a vigorous, manly life. It must be confessed that our saints suffer greatly from this moral and physical *anæmia*, this bloodlessness, which separates them, more effectually than a cloister, from the strong life of the age. What satirists upon religion are those parents who say of their pallid, puny, sedentary, lifeless, joyless little offspring, "He is born for a minister," while the ruddy, the brave, and the strong are as promptly assigned to a secular career! Never yet did an ill-starred young saint waste his Saturday afternoons in preaching sermons in the garret to his deluded little sisters and their dolls, without living to repent it in maturity. These precocious little sentimentalists wither away like

blanched potato-plants in a cellar; and then comes some vigorous youth from his out-door work or play, and grasps the rudder of the age, as he grasped the oar, the bat, or the plough-handle. We distrust the achievements of every saint without a body; and really have hopes of the Cambridge Divinity School, since hearing that it has organized a boat-club.

We speak especially of men, but the same principles apply to women. The triumphs of Rosa Bonheur and Harriet Hosmer grew out of a free and vigorous training, and they learned to delineate muscle by using it.

Everybody admires the physical training of military and naval schools. But these same persons never seem to imagine that the body is worth cultivating for any purpose, except to annihilate the bodies of others. Yet it needs more training to preserve life than to destroy it. The vocation of a literary man is far more perilous than that of a frontier dragoon. The latter dies at most but once, by an Indian bullet; the former dies daily, unless he be warned in time and take occasional refuge in the saddle and the prairie with the dragoon. What battle-piece is so pathetic as Browning's "Grammarian's Funeral"? Do not waste your gymnastics on the West Point or Annapolis student, whose whole life will be one of active exercise, but bring them into the professional schools and the counting-rooms. Whatever may be the exceptional cases, the stern truth remains, that the great deeds of the world can be more easily done by illiterate men than by sickly ones. Wisely said Horace Mann, "All through the life of a pure-minded but feeble-bodied man, his path is lined with memory's gravestones, which mark the spots where noble enterprises perished, for lack of physical vigor to embody them in deeds." And yet more eloquently it has been said by a younger American thinker, (D. A. Wasson,) "Intellect in a weak body is like gold in a spent swimmer's pocket,—the richer he would be, under other circumstances, by so much the greater his danger now."

Of course, the mind has immense control over physical endurance, and every one knows that among soldiers, sailors, emigrants, and woodsmen, the leaders, though more delicately nurtured, will often endure hardship better than the followers,—"because," says Sir Philip Sidney, "they are supported by the great appetites of honor." But for all these triumphs of nervous power a reaction lies in store, as in the case of the superhuman efforts often made by delicate women. And besides, there is a point beyond which no mental heroism can ignore the body,—as, for instance, in seasickness and toothache. Can virtue arrest consumption, or self-devotion set free the agonized breath of asthma, or heroic energy defy paralysis? More formidable still are those subtle results of disease, which cannot be resisted, because their source is unseen. Voltaire declared that the fate of a nation had often depended on the good or bad digestion of a prime-minister; and Motley holds that the gout of Charles V. changed the destinies of the world.

But so blinded, on these matters, is our accustomed mode of thought, that Mr. Beecher's recent lecture on the Laws of Nature has been met with strong objections from a portion of the religious press. These newspapers agree in asserting that admiration of physical strength belonged to the barbarous ages of the world. So it certainly did, and so much the better for those ages. They had that one merit, at least; and so surely as an exclusively intellectual civilization ignored it, the arm of some robust barbarian prostrated that civilization at last. What Sismondi says of courage is preëminently true of that bodily vigor which it usually presupposes: that, although it is by no means the first of virtues, its loss is more fatal than that of all others. "Were it possible to unite the advantages of a perfect government with the cowardice of a whole people, those advantages would be utterly valueless, since they would be utterly without security."

Physical health is a necessary condi-

tion of all permanent success. To the American people it has a stupendous importance, because it is the only attribute of power in which they are losing ground. Guaranty us against physical degeneracy, and we can risk all other perils,—financial crises, Slavery, Romanism, Mormonism, Border Ruffians, and New York assassins; “domestic malice, foreign levy, nothing” can daunt us. Guaranty us health, and Mrs. Stowe cannot frighten us with all the prophecies of Dred; but when her sister Catherine informs us that in all the vast female acquaintance of the Beecher family there are not a dozen healthy women, we confess ourselves a little tempted to despair of the republic.

The one drawback to satisfaction in our Public-School System is the physical weakness which it reveals and helps to perpetuate. One seldom notices a ruddy face in the school-room, without tracing it back to a Transatlantic origin. The teacher of a large school in Canada went so far as to declare to us, that she could recognize the children born this side the line by their invariable appearance of ill-health joined with intellectual precocity,—stamina wanting, and the place supplied by equations. Look at a class of boys or girls in our Grammar Schools; a glance along the line of their backs affords a study of geometrical curves. You almost long to reverse the position of their heads, as Dante has those of the false prophets, and thus improve their figures; the rounded shoulders affording a vigorous chest, and the hollow chest an excellent back.

There are statistics to show that the average length of human life is increasing; but it is probable that this results from the diminution of epidemic diseases, rather than from any general improvement in *physique*. There are facts also to indicate an increase of size and strength with advancing civilization. It is known that two men of middle size were unable to find a suit of armor large enough among the sixty sets owned by Sir Samuel Meyrick. It is also known that the strong-

est American Indians cannot equal the average strength of wrist of Europeans, or rival them in ordinary athletic feats. Indeed, it is generally supposed that any physical deterioration is local, being peculiar to the United States. Recently, however, we have read, with great regret, in the “Englishwoman’s Review,” that “it is allowed by all, that the appearance of the English peasant, in the present day, is very different to [from] what it was fifty years ago; the robust, healthy, hard-looking countrywoman or girl is as rare now as the pale, delicate, nervous female of our times would have been a century ago.” And the writer proceeds to give alarming illustrations, based upon the appearance of children in English schools, both in city and country.

We cannot speak for England, but certainly no one can visit Canada without being struck with the spectacle of a more athletic race of people than our own. On every side one sees rosy female faces and noble manly figures. In the shop-windows, in winter weather, hang snow-shoes, “gentlemen’s and ladies’ sizes.” The street-corners inform you that the members of the “Curling Club” are to meet to-day at “Dolly’s,” and the “Montreal Fox-hounds” at St. Lawrence Hall to-morrow. And next day comes off the annual steeple-chase, at the “Mile-End Course,” ridden by gentlemen of the city with their own horses; a scene, by the way, whose exciting interest can scarcely be conceived by those accustomed only to “trials of speed” at agricultural exhibitions. Everything indicates out-door habits and athletic constitutions.

We are aware that we may be met with the distinction between a good idle constitution and a good working constitution,—the latter of which often belongs to persons who make no show of physical powers. But this only means that there are different temperaments and types of physical organization, while, within the limits of each, the distinction between a healthy and a diseased condition still holds; and we insist on that alone.

Still more specious is the claim of the Fourth-of-July orators, that, health or no health, it is the sallow Americans, and not the robust English, who are really leading the world. But this, again, is a question of temperaments. The Englishman concedes the greater intensity, but prefers a more solid and permanent power. It is the noble masonry and vast canals of Montreal, against the Aladdin's palaces of Chicago. "I observe," admits the Englishman, "that an American can accomplish more, at a single effort, than any other man on earth; but I also observe that he exhausts himself in the achievement. Kane, a delicate invalid, astounds the world by his two Arctic winters,—and then dies in tropical Cuba." The solution is simple; nervous energy is grand, and so is muscular power; combine the two, and you move the world.

We shall assume, as admitted, therefore, the deficiency of physical health in America, and the need of a great amendment. But into the general question of cause and cure we do not propose to enter. In view of the vast variety of special theories, and the inadequacy of any one, (or any dozen,) we shall forbear. To our thinking, the best diagnosis of the universal American disease is to be found in Andral's famous description of the cholera: "Anatomical characteristics, insufficient;—cause, mysterious;—nature, hypothetical;—symptoms, characteristic;—diagnosis, easy;—*treatment, very doubtful.*"

Every man must have his hobby, however, and it is a great deal to ride only one hobby at a time. For the present we disavow all minor ones. We forbear giving our pet arguments in defence of animal food, and in opposition to tobacco, coffee, and india-rubbers. We will not criticize the old-school physician whom we once knew, who boasted of not having performed a thorough ablution for twenty-five years; nor will we question the physiological orthodoxy of Miss Sedgwick's New England artist, who represented the Goddess of Health with a pair

of flannel drawers on. Still less should we think of debating (or of tasting) Kennedy's Medical Discovery, or R. R. R., or the Cow Pepsin. We know our aim, and will pursue it with a single eye.

"The wise for cure on *exercise* depend,"

saith Dryden,—and that is our hobby.

A great physician has said, "I know not which is most indispensable for the support of the frame,—food or exercise." But who, in this community, really takes exercise? Even the mechanic commonly confines himself to one set of muscles; the blacksmith acquires strength in his right arm, and the dancing-master in his left leg. But the professional or business man, what muscles has he at all? The tradition, that Phidippides ran from Athens to Sparta, one hundred and twenty miles, in two days, seems to us Americans as mythical as the Golden Fleece. Even to ride sixty miles in a day, to walk thirty, to run five, or to swim one, would cost most men among us a fit of illness, and many their lives. Let any man test his physical condition, we will not say by sawing his own cord of wood, but by an hour in the gymnasium or at cricket, and his enfeebled muscular apparatus will groan with rheumatism for a week. Or let him test the strength of his arms and chest by raising and lowering himself a few times upon a horizontal bar, or hanging by the arms to a rope, and he will probably agree with Galen in pronouncing it *robustum validumque laborem*. Yet so manifestly are these things within the reach of common constitutions, that a few weeks or months of judicious practice will renovate his whole system, and the most vigorous exercise will refresh him like a cold bath.

To a well-regulated frame, mere physical exertion, even for an uninteresting object, is a great enjoyment, which is, of course, enhanced by the excitement of games and sports. To almost every man there is joy in the memory of these things; they are the happiest associations of his boyhood. It does not

occur to him, that he also might be as happy as a boy, if he lived more like one. What do most men know of the "wild joys of living," the daily zest and luxury of out-door existence, in which every healthy boy beside them revels?—skating, while the orange sky of sunset dies away over the delicate tracery of gray branches, and the throbbing feet pause in their tingling motion, and the frosty air is filled with the shrill sound of distant steel, the resounding of the ice, and the echoes up the hillsides?—sailing, beating up against a stiff breeze, with the waves thumping under the bow, as if a dozen sea-gods had laid their heads together to resist it?—climbing tall trees, where the higher foliage, closing around, cures the dizziness which began below, and one feels as if he had left a coward beneath and found a hero above?—the joyous hour of crowded life in football or cricket?—the gallant glories of riding, and the jubilee of swimming?

The charm which all have found in Tom Brown's "School Days at Rugby" lies simply in this healthy boy's-life which it exhibits, and in the recognition of physical culture, which is so novel to Americans. At present, boys are annually sent across the Atlantic simply for bodily training. But efforts after the same thing begin to creep in among ourselves. A few Normal Schools have gymnasiums (rather neglected, however); the "Mystic Hall Female Seminary" advertises riding-horses; and we believe the new "Concord School" recognizes boating as an incidental;—but these are all exceptional cases, and far between. Faint and shadowy in our memory are certain ruined structures lingering Stonehenge-like on the Cambridge "Delta,"—and mysterious pits adjoining, into which Freshmen were decoyed to stumble, and of which we find that vestiges still remain. Tradition spoke of Dr. Follen and German gymnastics; but the beneficent exotic was transplanted prematurely, and died. The only direct encouragement of athletic exercises which stands out in our memory of academic life was a certain inestima-

ble shed on the "College Wharf," which was for a brief season the paradise of swimmers, and which, after having been deliberately arranged for their accommodation, was suddenly removed, the next season, to make room for coal-bins. Manly sports were not positively discouraged in our day,—but that was all.

Yet earlier reminiscences of the same beloved Cambridge suggest deeper gratitude. Thanks to thee, W. W.,—first pioneer, in New England, of true classical learning,—last wielder of the old English birch,—for the manly British sympathy which encouraged to activity the bodies, as well as the brains, of the numerous band of boys who played beneath the stately elms of that pleasant play-ground! Who among modern pedagogues can show such an example of vigorous pedestrianism in his youth as thou in thine age? and who now grants half-holidays, unasked, for no other reason than that the skating is good and the boys must use it while it lasts?

We cling still to the belief, that the Persian *curriculum* of studies—to ride, to shoot, and to speak the truth—is the better part of a boy's education. As the urchin is undoubtedly physically safer for having learned to turn a somerset and fire a gun, perilous though these feats appear to mothers,—so his soul is made healthier, larger, freer, stronger, by hours and days of manly exercise and copious draughts of open air, at whatever risk of idle habits and bad companions. Even if the balance is sometimes lost, and play prevails, what matter? We rejoice to have been a schoolmate of him who wrote

"The hours the idle schoolboy squandered
The man would die ere he'd forget."

"Only keep in a boy a pure and generous heart, and, whether he work or play, his time can scarcely be wasted. Which really has done most for the education of Boston,—Dixwell and Sherwin, or Sheridan and Braman?

Should it prove, however, that the cultivation of active exercises diminishes

the proportion of time given by children to study, we can only view it as an added advantage. Every year confirms us in the conviction, that our schools, public and private, systematically overtask the brains of the rising generation. We all complain that Young America grows to mental maturity too soon, and yet we all contribute our share to continue the evil. It is but a few weeks since we saw the warmest praises, in the New York newspapers, of a girl's school, in that city, where the appointed hours of study amounted to nine and a quarter daily, and the hours of exercise to a bare unit. Almost all the Students' Manuals assume that American students need stimulus instead of restraint, and urge them to multiply the hours of study and diminish those of out-door amusements and of sleep, as if the great danger did not lie that way already. When will parents and teachers learn to regard mental precocity as a disaster to be shunned, instead of a glory to be coveted? We could count up a dozen young men who have graduated at Harvard College, during the last twenty years, with high honors, before the age of eighteen; and we suppose that nearly every one of them has lived to regret it. "Nature," says Tissot, in his *Essay on the Health of Men of Letters*, "is unable successfully to carry on two rapid processes at the same time. We attempt a prodigy, and the result is a fool." There was a child in Languedoc who at six years was of the size of a large man; of course, his mind was a vacuum. On the other hand, Jean Philippe Baratier was a learned man in his eighth year, and died of apparent old age at twenty. Both were monstrosities, and a healthy childhood would be equidistant from either.

One invaluable merit of out-door sports is to be found in this, that they afford the best cement for childish friendship. Their associations outlive all others. There is many a man, now perchance hard and worldly, whom we love to pass in the street simply because in meeting him we meet spring flowers and autumn

chestnuts, skates and cricket-balls, cherry-birds and pickerel. There is an indescribable fascination in the gradual transference of these childish companionships into maturer relations. We love to encounter in the contests of manhood those whom we first met at football, and to follow the profound thoughts of those who always dived deeper, even in the river, than our efforts could attain. There is a certain governor, of whom we personally can remember only, that he found the Fresh Pond heronry, which we sought in vain; and in memory the august sheriff of a neighboring county still skates in victorious pursuit of us, (fit emblem of swift-footed justice!) on the black ice of the same lovely lake. Our imagination crowns the Cambridge poet, and the Cambridge sculptor, not with their later laurels, but with the willows out of which they taught us to carve whistles, shriller than any trump of fame, in the happy days when Mount Auburn was Sweet Auburn still.

Luckily, boy-nature is too strong for theory. And we admit, for the sake of truth, that physical education is not so entirely neglected among us as the absence of popular games would indicate. We suppose, that, if the truth were told, this last fact proceeds partly from the greater freedom of field-sports in this country. There are few New England boys who do not become familiar with the rod or gun in childhood. We take it, that, in the mother country, the monopoly of land interferes with this, and that game laws, by a sort of spontaneous pun, tend to introduce games.

Again, the practice of match-playing is opposed to our habits, both as a consumer of time and as partaking too much of gambling. Still, it is done in the case of "firemen's musters," which are, we believe, a wholly indigenous institution. We have known a very few cases where the young men of neighboring country parishes have challenged each other to games of base-ball, as is common in England; and there was, if we mistake not, a recent match at football between the boys

of the Fall River and the New Bedford High Schools. And within a few years regattas and cricket-matches have become common events. Still, these public exhibitions are far from being a full exponent of the athletic habits of our people; and there is really more going on among us than this meagre "pentathlon" exhibits.

Again, a foreigner is apt to infer, from the more desultory and unsystematized character of our out-door amusements, that we are less addicted to them than we really are. But this belongs to the habit of our nation, impatient, to a fault, of precedents and conventionalisms. The English-born Frank Forrester complains of the total indifference of our sportsmen to correct phraseology. We should say, he urges, "for large flocks of wild fowl,—of swans, a *whiteness*,—of geese, a *gaggle*,—of brent, a *gang*,—of duck, a *team* or a *plump*,—of widgeon, a *trip*,—of snipes, a *wisp*,—of larks, an *exaltation*.—The young of grouse are *cheepers*,—of quail, *squeakers*,—of wild duck, *flappers*." And yet, careless of these proprieties, Young America goes "gunning" to good purpose. So with all games. A college football-player reads with astonishment Tom Brown's description of the very complicated performance which passes under that name at Rugby. So cricket is simplified; it is hard to organize an American club into the conventional distribution of point and cover-point, long slip and short slip, but the players persist in winning the game by the most heterodox grouping. This constitutional independence has its good and evil results, in sports as elsewhere. It is this which has created the American breed of trotting horses, and which won the Cowes regatta by a mainsail as flat as a board.

But, so far as there is a deficiency in these respects among us, this generation must not shrink from the responsibility. It is unfair to charge it on the Puritans. They are not even answerable for Massachusetts; for there is no doubt that athletic exercises, of some sort, were far

more generally practised in this community before the Revolution than at present. A state of almost constant Indian warfare then created an obvious demand for muscle and agility. At present there is no such immediate necessity. And it has been supposed that a race of shopkeepers, brokers, and lawyers could live without bodies. Now that the terrible records of dyspepsia and paralysis are disproving this, we may hope for a reaction in favor of bodily exercises. And when we once begin the competition, there seems no reason why any other nation should surpass us. The wide area of our country, and its variety of surface and shore, offer a corresponding range of physical training. Take our coasts and inland waters alone. It is one thing to steer a pleasure-boat with a rudder, and another to steer a dory with an oar; one thing to paddle a birch-canoe, and another to paddle a ducking-float; in a Charles River club-boat, the post of honor is in the stern,—in a Penobscot *bateau*, in the bow; and each of these experiences educates a different set of muscles. Add to this the constitutional American receptiveness, which welcomes new pursuits without distinction of origin,—unites German gymnastics with English sports and sparring, and takes the red Indians for instructors in paddling and running. With these various aptitudes, we certainly ought to become a nation of athletes.

We have shown, that, in one way or another, American schoolboys obtain active exercise. The same is true, in a very limited degree, even of girls. They are occasionally, in our larger cities, sent to gymnasiums,—the more the better. Dancing-schools are better than nothing, though all the attendant circumstances are usually unfavorable. A fashionable young lady is estimated to traverse her three hundred miles a season on foot; and this needs training. But out-door exercise for girls is terribly restricted, first by their costume, and secondly by the remarks of Mrs. Grundy. All young female animals unquestionably require

as much motion as their brothers, and naturally make as much noise; but what mother would not be shocked, in the case of her girl of twelve, by one-tenth part the activity and uproar which are recognized as being the breath of life to her twin brother? Still, there is a change going on, which is tantamount to an admission that there is an evil to be remedied. Twenty years ago, if we mistake not, it was by no means considered "proper" for little girls to play with their hoops and balls on Boston Common; and swimming and skating have hardly been recognized as "lady-like" for half that period of time.

Still it is beyond question, that far more out-door exercise is habitually taken by the female population of almost all European countries than by our own. In the first place, the peasant women of all other countries (a class non-existent here) are trained to active labor from childhood; and what traveller has not seen, on foreign mountain-paths, long rows of maidens ascending and descending the difficult ways, bearing heavy burdens on their heads, and winning by the exercise such a superb symmetry and grace of figure as were a new wonder of the world to Cisatlantic eyes? Among the higher classes, physical exercises take the place of these things. Miss Beecher glowingly describes a Russian female seminary in which nine hundred girls of the noblest families were being trained by Ling's system of calisthenics, and her informant declared that she never beheld such an array of girlish health and beauty. Englishwomen, again, have horsemanship and pedestrianism, in which their ordinary feats appear to our healthy women incredible. Thus, Mary Lamb writes to Miss Wordsworth, (both ladies being between fifty and sixty,) "You say you can walk fifteen miles with ease; that is exactly my stint, and more fatigues me"; and then speaks pityingly of a delicate lady who could accomplish only "four or five miles every third or fourth day, keeping very quiet between." How few American ladies, in the fulness of

their strength, (if female strength among us has any fulness,) can surpass this English invalid!

But even among American men, how few carry athletic habits into manhood! The great hindrance, no doubt, is absorption in business; and we observe that this winter's hard times and consequent leisure have given a great stimulus to out-door sports. But in most places there is the further obstacle, that a certain stigma of boyishness goes with them. So early does this begin, that we remember, in our teens, to have been slightly reproached with juvenility, because, though a Senior Sophister, we still clung to football. Juvenility! We only wish we had the opportunity now. Full-grown men are, of course, intended to take not only as much, but far more active exercise than boys. Some physiologists go so far as to demand six hours of out-door life daily; and it is absurd in us to complain that we have not the healthy animal happiness of children, while we forswear their simple sources of pleasure.

Most of the exercise habitually taken by men of sedentary pursuits is in the form of walking. We believe its merits to be greatly overrated. Walking is to real exercise what vegetable food is to animal; it satisfies the appetite, but the nourishment is not sufficiently concentrated to be invigorating. It takes a man out-doors, and it uses his muscles, and therefore of course it is good; but it is not the best kind of good. Walking, for walking's sake, becomes tedious. We must not ignore the *play-impulse* in human nature, which, according to Schiller, is the foundation of all Art. In female boarding-schools, teachers uniformly testify to the aversion of pupils to the prescribed walk. Give them a sled, or a pair of skates, or a row-boat, or put them on horseback, and they will protract the period of exercise till the teacher in turn grumbles. Put them into a gymnasium, with an efficient teacher, and they will soon require restraint, instead of urging.

Gymnastic exercises have two disadvantages: one, in being commonly per-

formed under cover (though this may sometimes prove an advantage as well); another, in requiring apparatus, and at first a teacher. These apart, perhaps no other form of exercise is so universally invigorating. A teacher is required, less for the sake of stimulus than of precaution. The tendency is almost always to dare too much; and there is also need of a daily moderation in commencing exercises; for the wise pupil will always prefer to supple his muscles by mild exercises and calisthenics, before proceeding to harsher performances on the bars and ladders. With this precaution, strains are easily avoided; even with this, the hand will sometimes blister and the body ache, but perseverance will cure the one and Russia Salve the other; and the invigorated life in every limb will give a perpetual charm to those seemingly aimless leaps and somersets. The feats once learned, a private gymnasium can easily be constructed, of the simplest apparatus, and so daily used; though nothing can wholly supply the stimulus afforded by a class in a public institution, with a competent teacher. In summer, the whole thing can partially be dispensed with; but we are really unable to imagine how any person gets through the winter happily without a gymnasium.

For the favorite in-door exercise of dumb-bells we have little to say; they are not an enlivening performance, nor do they task a variety of muscles,—while they are apt to strain and fatigue them, if used with energy. Far better, for a solitary exercise, is the Indian club, a lineal descendant of that antique one in whose handle rare medicaments were fabled to be concealed. The modern one is simply a rounded club, weighing from four pounds upwards, according to the strength of the pupil; grasping a pair of these by the handles, he learns a variety of exercises, having always before him the feats of the marvellous Mr. Harrison, whose praise is in the “*Spirit of the Times*,” and whose portrait adorns the back of Dr. Trall’s *Gymnastics*. By the latest bulletins, that gentleman measured

forty-two and a half inches round the chest, and employed clubs weighing no less than forty-seven pounds.

It may seem to our non-resistant friends to be going rather far, if we should indulge our saints in taking boxing lessons; yet it is not long since a New York clergyman saved his life in Broadway, by the judicious administration of a “cross-counter” or a “flying crook,” and we have not heard of his excommunication from the Church Militant. No doubt, a laudable aversion prevails, in this country, to the English practices of pugilism; yet it must be remembered that sparring is, by its very name, a “science of self-defence”; and if a gentleman wishes to know how to hold a rude antagonist at bay, in any emergency, and keep out of an undignified scuffle, the means are most easily afforded him by the art which Pythagoras founded. Apart from this, boxing exercises every muscle in the body, and gives a wonderful quickness to eye and hand. These same remarks apply, though in a minor degree, to fencing also.

Billiards is a graceful game, and affords, in some respects, admirable training, but is hardly to be classed among athletic exercises. Tenpins afford, perhaps, the most popular form of exercise among us, and have become almost a national game, and a good one, too, so far as it goes. The English game of bowls is less entertaining, and is, indeed, rather a sluggish sport, though it has the merit of being played in the open air. The severer British sports, as tennis and rackets, are scarcely more than names, to us Americans.

Passing now to out-door exercises, (and no one should confine himself to in-door ones,) we hold with the Thalesian school, and rank water first. Vishnu Sarma gives, in his apoloques, the characteristics of the fit place for a wise man to live in, and enumerates among its necessities first “a Rajah” and then “a river.” Democrats as we are, we can dispense with the first, but not with the second. A square mile even of pond

water is worth a year's schooling to any intelligent boy. A boat is a kingdom. We personally own one,—a mere flat-bottomed "float," with a centre-board. It has seen service,—it is eight years old,—has spent two winters under the ice, and been fished in by boys every day for as many summers. It grew at last so hopelessly leaky, that even the boys disdained it. It cost seven dollars originally, and we would not sell it to-day for seventeen. To own the poorest boat is better than hiring the best. It is a link to Nature; without a boat, one is so much the less a man.

Sailing is of course delicious; it is as good as flying to steer anything with wings of canvas, whether one stand by the wheel of a clipper-ship, or by the clumsy stern-oar of a "gundalow." But rowing has also its charms; and the Indian noiselessness of the paddle, beneath the fringing branches of the Assabeth or Artichoke, puts one into Fairyland at once, and Hiawatha's *cheemaun* becomes a possible possession. Rowing is peculiarly graceful and appropriate as a feminine exercise, and any able-bodied girl can learn to handle one light oar at the first lesson, and two at the second; this, at least, we demand of our own pupils.

Swimming has also a birdlike charm of motion. The novel element, the free action, the abated drapery, give a sense of personal contact with Nature which nothing else so fully bestows. No later triumph of existence is so fascinating, perhaps, as that in which the boy first wins his panting way across the deep gulf that severs one green bank from another, (ten yards, perhaps,) and feels himself thenceforward lord of the watery world. The Athenian phrase for a man who knew nothing was, that he could "neither read nor swim." Yet there is a vast amount of this ignorance; the majority of sailors, it is said, cannot swim a stroke; and in a late lake disaster, many able-bodied men perished by drowning, in calm water, only half a mile from shore. At our watering-places

it is rare to see a swimmer venture out more than a rod or two, though this proceeds partly from the fear of sharks,—as if sharks of the dangerous order were not far more afraid of the rocks than the swimmers of being eaten. But the fact of the timidity is unquestionable; and we were told by a certain clerical frequenter of a watering-place, himself a robust swimmer, that he had never met but two companions who would venture boldly out with him, both being ministers, and one a distinguished Ex-President of Brown University. We place this fact to the credit of the bodies of our saints.

But space forbids us thus to descant on the details of all active exercises. Riding may be left to the eulogies of Mr. N. P. Willis, and cricket to Mr. Lillywhite's "Guide." We will only say, in passing, that it is pleasant to see the rapid spread of clubs for the latter game, which a few years since was practised only by a few transplanted Englishmen and Scotchmen; and it is pleasant also to observe the twin growth of our indigenous American game of base-ball, whose briskness and unceasing activity are perhaps more congenial, after all, to our national character, than the comparative deliberation of cricket. Football, bating its roughness, is the most glorious of all games to those whose animal life is sufficiently vigorous to enjoy it. Skating is just at present the fashion for ladies as well as gentlemen, and needs no apostle; the open weather of the current winter has been unusually favorable for its practice, and it is destined to become a permanent institution.

A word, in passing, on the literature of athletic exercises; it is too scanty to detain us long. Five hundred books, it is estimated, have been written on the digestive organs, but we shall not speak of half a dozen in connection with the muscular powers. The common Physiologies recommend exercise in general terms, but seldom venture on details; unhappily, they are written, for the most part, by men who have already lost their

own health, and are therefore useful as warnings rather than examples. The first real book of gymnastics printed in this country, so far as we know, was the work of the veteran Salzmann, translated and published in Philadelphia, in 1802, and sometimes to be met with in libraries,—an odd, desultory book, with many good reasonings and suggestions, and quaint pictures of youths exercising in the old German costume. Like Dr. Follen's gymnasium, at Cambridge, it was probably transplanted too early, and produced no effect. Next came, in 1836, the book which is still, after twenty years, the standard, so far as it goes,—Walker's "Manly Exercises,"—a thoroughly English book, and needing adaptation to our habits, but full of manly vigor, and containing good and copious directions for skating, swimming, boating, and horsemanship. The only later general treatise worth naming is Dr. Trall's recently published "Family Gymnasium,"—a good book, yet not good enough. On gymnastics proper it contains scarcely anything; and the essays on rowing, riding, and skating are so meagre, that they might almost as well have been omitted, though that on swimming is excellent. The main body of the book is devoted to the subject of calisthenics, and especially to Ling's system; all this is valuable for its novelty, although we cannot imagine how a system so tediously elaborate and so little interesting can ever be made very useful for American pupils. Miss Beecher has an excellent essay on calisthenics, with very useful figures, at the end of her "Physiology." And on proper gymnastic exercises there is a little book so full and admirable, that it atones for the defects of all the others,—"Paul Preston's Gymnastics,"—nominally a child's book, but so spirited and graphic, and entering so admirably into the whole extent of the subject, that it ought to be reprinted and find ten thousand readers.

In our own remarks, we have purposely confined ourselves to those phys-

ical exercises which partake most of the character of sports. Field-sports alone we have omitted, because these are so often discussed by abler hands. Mechanical and horticultural labors lie out of our present province. So do the walks and labors of the artist and the man of science. The out-door study of natural history alone is a vast field, even yet very little entered upon. In how many American towns or villages are to be found *local collections* of natural objects, such as every large town in Europe affords, and without which the foundations of thorough knowledge cannot be laid? We can scarcely point to any. We have innumerable fragmentary and aimless "Museums,"—collections of South-Sea shells in inland villages, and of aboriginal remains in seaport towns,—mere curiosity-shops, which no man confers any real benefit by collecting; while the most ignorant person may be a true benefactor to science by forming a cabinet, however scanty, of the animal and vegetable productions of his own township. We have often heard Professor Agassiz lament this waste of energy, and we would urge upon all our readers to do their share to remedy the defect, while they invigorate their bodies by the exercise which the effort will give, and the joyous open-air life into which it will take them.

For, after all, the secret charm of all these sports and studies is simply this,—that they bring us into more familiar intercourse with Nature. They give us that *vitam sub divo* in which the Roman exulted,—those out-door days, which, say the Arabs, are not to be reckoned in the length of life. Nay, to a true lover of the open air, night beneath its curtain is as beautiful as day. We personally have camped out under a variety of auspices,—before a fire of pine logs in the forests of Maine, beside a blaze of faya-boughs on the steep side of a foreign volcano, and beside no fire at all, (except a possible one of Sharp's rifles,) in that domestic volcano, Kansas; and every such re-

membrane is worth many nights of indoor slumber. We never found a week in the year, nor an hour of day or night, which had not, in the open air, its own special beauty. We will not say, with Reade's Australians, that the only use of a house is to sleep in the lee of it; but there is method in even that madness. As for rain, it is chiefly formidable indoors. Lord Bacon used to ride with uncovered head in a shower, and loved "to feel the spirit of the universe upon his brow"; and we once knew an enthusiastic hydropathic physician who loved to expose himself in thunder-storms at midnight, without a shred of earthly clothing between himself and the atmosphere. Some prudent persons may possibly regard this as being rather an extreme, while yet their own extreme of avoidance of every breath from heaven is really the more extravagantly unreasonable of the two.

It is easy for the sentimentalist to say, "But if the object is, after all, the enjoyment of Nature, why not go and enjoy her, without any collateral aim?" Because it is the universal experience of man, that, if we have a collateral aim, we enjoy her far more. He knows not the

beauty of the universe, who has not learned the subtle mystery, that Nature loves to work on us by *indirections*. Astronomers say, that, when observing with the naked eye, you see a star less clearly by looking at it, than by looking at the next one. Margaret Fuller's fine saying touches the same point,—“Nature will not be stared at.” Go out merely to enjoy her, and it seems a little tame, and you begin to suspect yourself of affectation. We know persons who, after years of abstinence from athletic sports or the pursuits of the naturalist or artist, have resumed them, simply in order to restore to the woods and the sunsets the zest of the old fascination. Go out under pretence of shooting on the marshes or botanizing in the forests; study entomology, that most fascinating, most neglected of all the branches of natural history; go to paint a red maple-leaf in autumn, or watch a pickerel-line in winter; meet Nature on the cricket ground or at the regatta; swim with her, ride with her, run with her, and she gladly takes you back once more within the horizon of her magic, and your heart of manhood is born again into more than the fresh happiness of the boy.

BY THE DEAD.

PRIDE that sat on the beautiful brow,
 Scorn that lay in the arching lips,
 Will of the oak-grain, where are ye now?
 I may dare to touch her finger-tips!
 Deep, flaming eyes, ye are shallow enough;
 The steadiest fire burns out at last.
 Throw back the shutters,—the sky is rough,
 And the winds are high,—but the night is past.

Mother, I speak with the voice of a man;
 Death is between us,—I stoop no more;
 And yet so dim is each new-born plan,
 I am feebler than ever I was before,—